

Three Minutes -15

Who is bigger, You or me?

puvium iru visumbum
ninnakatta * nl en
seviyin vazhi pugundu en uLLAi
- avivu inRi
yAn periyai nl periyai
enbadanai yAr aRivAr?
Unparugu nEmiyAi! uLLu
(nammAzhvAr, periya tiruvantAdi – 75)

புவியும் இரு விசும்பும்
நின்னகத்த * நீ என்
செவியின் வழி புகுந்து என்
உள்ளாய் * அவிவு இன்றி
யான் பெரியன் நீ பெரியை
என்பதனை யார் அறிவார்?
ஊன்பருகு நேமியாய் உள்ளு
(நம்மாழ்வார், பெரிய திருவந்தாதி - 75)

nEmiyAi! = (Oh Lord!, Who holds) the
disc
Unparugu = (that) eats the flesh (of the
enemies) !
puvium = This world
iru visumbum = (and) shrIvaikuntam
ninnagatta = are all due to Your will nl
en = That magnificent You
seviyin vazhi pugundu = has gone
through my ear
en uLLAi = and staying inside me,
avivu inRi = without leaving me for a
moment
[Now]
uLLu = Think for a moment!
yAn periyai = (truthfully) Am I big?

nl periyai = or You the big one?
enbadanai yAr aRivAr? = Who knows?

This verse (pAsuram) is found in the third hymn (prabandham) called Periya tiruvantAdi, authored by nammAzhvAr. He brings out the conundrum of bigness between him and the Lord.

Oh Lord (shrlman nArAyaNa)! You are holding the disc (sudarshana) which devours the flesh of all the enemies. This world (bhU and other lokams) and other worlds (shIvaikuNTham) act at Your will (sankalpam). You, thus display Your lordship over everything. Though your bigness is an irrefutable truth, how come You have entered into me through my auditory abilities and stay inside me, refusing to leave even for a second? Now, think for a moment about this paradox, who is really bigger You or me?

Lord has everything under his support, control, and ownership. This applies to earth (prakrR^iti related) and mokSham (aprAkR^itam). The question is, Who is bigger? The Lord, who holds everything inside Him or the AzhvAr who Holds that Lord Himself in him?

At the outset, this may look silly, saying that the AzhvAr who is an ordinary human being claims that is bigger than the Lord. Is his statement like Ravana's, Kamsa's and other demons' based on ego and hatred (bhagavad dveSham) towards Lord? No. AzhvAr politely (sAtvika ahankAram) remarks that

he is bigger because he is His devotee and that the Lord has given everything to him. This is like the President, who comes home, bends down, and yields to his small grandchild who sits on his grandfather's back, like a horse ride.

**It is not taking, but giving that makes one richer.
That is why God is the richest.**

Here, AzhvAr brings out the finest of Lord's qualities (kalyANa guNa-s) in a nutshell. Lord has everything, but for who? He gives all His body (deham), His form (rUpam), His weapons (Ayudham), His wealth (aishvaryam) to His devotees to enjoy eternally. He says that actually He doesn't own anything; everything including the Lord Himself, is owned by them.

The moral here is the concept of reciprocity.

1. Reciprocate.

Love, affection, giving, sharing, helping all these qualities needs to be reciprocated. One way doesn't flourish too long.

2. Look at the intent and not the value .

What we offer to the Lord is such a tiny amount of something but He is prepared to give the entire universe to us. We learn from that and extend our giving to His children, everyone.

3. Show humility.

AzhvAr claims that he is big, with an attitude of extreme humility. In giving, don't patronize yourself. In receiving, don't assume you deserve it.